

Our Ride and Review of Sledgehammer's

On Friday 9/25, Frank and I took off on our bikes in sunny 68 degree weather for Oregon, our happy place. The tree color isn't changing yet (we weren't expecting it) but the weather couldn't have been better. Despite plain ole' green trees, the bright gold soy fields next to tall cornstalks and tan wheat fields were so stunning!

We found Oregon as pretty as usual but in 2-3 weeks it should be amazingly colorful. Lowden Park is open and the Indian statue is uncovered and watching over the Rock River. Be cautious on your way to or way back from Oregon around the T-intersection (Blomberg and River Rds) by the small "Shirley Bridge"it is full of gravel, probably being scattered by the many trucks travelling through that intersection on weekdays. Proceed slowly!

OK, so Sledgehammers is a new bar/sandwich place on Rt 2 a few blocks from the Paddlewheel Restaurant (where you enter the downtown area of Oregon) – and across from the Indian statue in Lowden. It is a large building, odd looking with a neon orange snow/construction fence in front of the entrance. The whole building is quirky-looking (including a silo shaped structure) with an all gravel parking lot, so we wouldn't recommend it at this time for that reason. The owner is hoping to have it paved sometime next year. There were tables outside, but we chose to sit indoors, another quirky, interesting atmosphere: tin ceiling, old fashioned ceiling fixtures, a stone waterfall, a bar foot-rail made of water pipe and a small menu on a sandwich board sitting on the floor. The two bartenders (females) told us that the owner is doing much of the work himself, so it all moves slowly. Although nearly empty for lunch on this Friday, they did say that they had two biker groups totally approximately 700 people last weekend.

Frank and I split pulled pork on a pretzel roll (with big steak fries) that was without a doubt, the BEST pulled pork we've ever had including our experiences in Idaho, Wyoming, Tennessee and Colorado. It was served in a cardboard basket – nothing fancy, but I would return again and tolerate the gravel just for that sandwich!

Needless to say, we will postpone a group ride to Sledgehammers until next year based on the condition of the parking lot. However, depending on weather, in 2-3 weeks, we may lead a ride to another Oregon restaurant just to be able to see the fall tree colors in that area!

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